



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE SUPPORT AGENCY  
9900 BELVOIR ROAD, SUITE 101  
FORT BELVOIR, VIRGINIA 22060-5567

DEC 17 2001

SFAE

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Telework Policy

The Department of Defense (DOD) has issued new Telework Policy and Guidance, both of which are available on the web through the Interagency Telework/Telecommuting Site at <http://www.telework.gov>.

This policy is designed to actively promote telework as a legitimate flexibility for managers and their employees throughout DOD. Department of the Army (DA) elected not to supplement the guidance. Addressees will use the guidance found in the above policy to implement telework. Answers to frequently asked questions, how to get started and steps for implementing telework are provided as enclosures.

The DA's telework coordinator at Manpower and Reserve Affairs (M&RA) is Ms Carol Simley, (703) 325-9980. The Army Acquisition Executive Support Agency's point of contact is Ms Kerstin Kiker Maze, (703) 805-1015, DSN 655-1015 or email [kikermak@aaesa.belvoir.army.mil](mailto:kikermak@aaesa.belvoir.army.mil).

KAREN A. WALKER  
Director  
Army Acquisition Executive  
Support Agency

Enclosures

# DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

## TELEWORK POLICY

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### References

1. Section 359 of Public Law No. 106-346 (Appendix 1)
2. DepSecDef Memorandum dated March 3, 1995, "Expanding Flexible Work Arrangements in the Department of Defense" (Appendix 2)
3. Presidential Executive Memorandum dated July 26, 2000, "Employing People with Significant Disabilities to Fill Federal Agency Jobs that can be Performed at Alternative Work Sites, Including the Home" (Appendix 3)
4. USD(P&R) Memorandum dated February 26, 1999, "Special Work Arrangements As Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities" (Appendix 4)

### A. PURPOSE

This Policy implements the requirements of Section 359 of Public Law No. 106-346 (reference A), which requires each Executive Agency to establish a policy under which eligible employees of the agency may participate in teleworking to the maximum extent possible without diminished employee performance. In Fiscal Year 2001, Section 359 of P.L. No. 106-346 requires that 25 percent of the eligible Federal workforce must be offered the opportunity to telework. An additional 25 percent of the eligible Federal workforce must be offered the opportunity to telework each successive year, thus permitting every eligible employee the opportunity to telework by the end of Fiscal Year 2004.

Any implementing telework regulations or other guidance developed by Department of Defense (DoD) Components must comply with this policy, as well as the law from which it is derived.

In implementing P.L. No. 106-346, this Policy is designed to actively promote telework as a legitimate flexibility for managers and their employees throughout DoD, and to:

- a. promote DoD as an employer of choice;
- b. improve the recruitment and retention of high-quality employees through enhancements to employees' quality of life;
- c. enhance the Department's efforts to employ and accommodate people with disabilities, including employees who have temporary or continuing health problems, or who might otherwise have to retire on disability;
- d. reduce traffic congestion and decrease energy consumption and pollution emissions;
- e. reduce office space, parking facilities, and transportation costs, including costs associated with payment of the transit subsidy; and
- f. complement Continuity of Operations Program (COOP) plans.

## B. SCOPE

This Policy applies to civilian employees employed in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the Department of Defense (hereafter referred to collectively as the DoD "Components").

The requirements of the law do not apply to employees paid by non-appropriated fund (NAF), but NAF employers may administratively extend coverage of this Policy to their NAF employees.

## C. DEFINITIONS

Ad hoc telework means approved telework performed on an occasional, one-time, or irregular basis. (Telework of less than one day per pay period is considered ad hoc.)

Alternative worksite means a place away from the traditional worksite that has been approved for the performance of officially assigned duties. It may be an employee's home, a telecenter, or other approved worksite including a facility established by state, local, or county governments or private sector organizations for use by teleworkers.

Regular and recurring telework means an approved work schedule where eligible employees regularly work at least one day per biweekly pay period at an alternative worksite.

Telecenter means a General Services Administration (GSA) telecenter.

Telework refers to any arrangement in which an employee performs officially assigned duties at an alternative worksite on either a regular and recurring, or on an ad hoc, basis (not including while on official travel).

Telework agreement means a written agreement, completed and signed by an employee and appropriate official(s) in his or her Component, that outlines the terms and conditions of the telework arrangement (example agreement at Appendix A of Telework Guide).

Traditional worksite refers to the location where an employee would work absent a telework arrangement.

## E. DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY

**Positions eligible for telework** are those involving tasks and work activities that are portable, do not depend on the employees being at the traditional worksite, and are conducive to supervisory oversight at the alternative worksite. **Positions shall not be excluded as eligible on the basis of occupation, series, grade or supervisory status.**

Tasks and functions generally suited for telework include, but are not limited to:

- a. thinking and writing;
- b. policy development;
- c. research;
- d. analysis (e.g. investigating, program analysis, policy analysis, financial analysis);
- e. report writing;
- f. telephone-intensive tasks;
- g. computer-oriented tasks (e.g. programming, data entry, word processing, web page design); or
- h. data processing.

Positions not generally eligible for telework are those positions involving tasks that are not suitable to be performed away from the traditional worksite, including tasks that:

- a. require the employee to have daily face-to-face contact with the supervisor, colleagues, clients, or the general public in order to perform his or her job effectively, which cannot otherwise be achieved via email, telephone, fax or similar electronic means;
- b. require daily access to classified information; or
- c. are part of trainee or entry level positions.

**An employee suitable for telework** is an employee whose demonstrated personal characteristics are well-suited to telework, as determined by the supervisor, including, as a minimum:

- a. demonstrated dependability and the ability to handle responsibility;
- b. a proven record of high personal motivation;
- c. the ability to prioritize work effectively and utilize good time management skills; and
- d. a proven or expected minimum performance rating of "fully successful", or equivalent.

Probationary status employees generally would not be eligible for telework because probationary status periods are established to allow supervisors an opportunity to personally observe and evaluate employee performance.

## F. RESPONSIBILITIES

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Civilian Personnel Policy) DASD(CPP)

The DASD(CPP) will serve as the focal point of the DoD Telework Program, and shall:

- a. develop Department policy on teleworking;

- b. oversee and coordinate DoD implementation and administration of the Telework Program;
- c. coordinate information on DoD telework initiatives;
- d. advise on the feasibility of telework arrangements;
- e. approve funding applications for telework by employees at GSA telecenters; and
- f. prepare consolidated reports for DoD on participation rates in the DoD Telework Program, and other data, on an annual and as required basis.

The Director of the Department of Defense Civilian Personnel Management Service shall:

- a) maintain the central fund for DoD teleworker participation at GSA telecenters.

The Heads of the DoD Components shall:

- a. administer a telework program in accordance with public law, this policy and any relevant DoD regulations;
- b. designate a Component Telework Coordinator to administer and oversee implementation of the telework program in the Component; and
- c. develop any Component specific guidelines on telework necessary to implement this policy within their organizations.

The DoD Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program (CAP) shall:

- a. support telework by employees with disabilities in accordance with CAP policies and procedures.





## U. S. Office of Personnel Management

# Successful Telework Policies - How to Get Started

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Experience in the public and private sectors has yielded information about factors that contribute to successful alternative workplace arrangements. Agencies should consider the following guidelines when establishing a telework program.

***Develop Formal Policies.*** Written policies and procedures are needed to ensure understanding and avoid misunderstanding about the terms and conditions of the alternate workplace arrangement. Policies should cover short term as well as continuing arrangements. As a supplement to written materials, orientation sessions for telework employees and their supervisors ensure a common understanding of the program requirements.

***Suitability of Work.*** Agencies should begin with a presumption that all positions are appropriate for telework. This proactive approach will extend telework to the widest range of employees possible. Managers should use an analytical method for determining whether a position is suitable for telework by focusing on the nature of the work and job characteristics. In many cases, 100 percent of a position will not lend itself to telework. However, the focus on discrete job tasks works to identify those tasks that can be performed away from the main office.

For example, telework is feasible for work that requires thinking and writing -- data analysis, reviewing grants or cases, writing decisions or reports; telephone-intensive tasks -- setting up a conference, obtaining information, following up on participants in a study; and for computer-oriented tasks -- programming, web page design, data entry, and word processing.

Beyond the obvious types of positions referenced in the preceding paragraphs, managers should explore other not-so-obvious positions and conduct a task-by-task analysis. For example, a group of physicians could organize the work in their clinic to permit each to complete his or her patient records at home while not impacting office coverage. Physicians will always make the time for updating patient records throughout the day whenever they can work it in. By reorganizing their time, and scheduling a telework day for each individual, all physicians can complete this task in an environment far more conducive to thoroughness and accuracy.

***Employees and Supervisors.*** The characteristics of an employee are particularly important. The employee should be an organized, highly disciplined, and conscientious self-starter who requires minimal supervision. His or her performance should be at least "fully successful." In certain situations, however, a supervisor may choose to offer telework as a way to help an employee improve performance.

Telework is not suitable for employees who need to be in the office to learn the organization, who require on-the-job training, who need close supervision, or who thrive on interaction with co-workers and would suffer from the isolation of working alone. The characteristics of the supervisor are also critical. He or she should be willing to try out the new arrangement and

take the necessary steps to ensure its success. Most importantly, in a teleworking environment, the supervisor should utilize the same proven effective management tools that are appropriate in a non-teleworking environment - and that means managing by results.

***Workplace Schedules.*** Most telework employees spend part of the workweek in the regular office to improve communication, minimize isolation, and use facilities not available offsite. Agencies should develop flexible procedures that allow supervisors and telecommuters to determine the best balance for individual situations.

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# Steps for Implementing Telework

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- Designate an Agency Telework Coordinator and contact.
- Provide the Agency Coordinator with training opportunities and information.
- Involve all key agency representatives, including local union representatives, human resource specialists, etc. in the agency telework planning.
- Establish a strategic plan with definitive timelines to accomplish implementation of telework including an evaluation tool.
- Identify individual agency challenges and devise a plan to overcome those challenges.
- Establish individual agency policy, including employee eligibility criteria. Several examples of telework arrangements, agreements, eligibility criteria, employee request forms, etc., can be accessed via the Internet. Use example forms as a starting place then customize it to the individual agency needs and requirements.
- Discuss the feasibility of possible alternative workplace arrangements with interested employees. By law, this opportunity needs to be presented to all eligible employees once policy has been established. However, employee interest and input will assist agency coordinators when developing the policies.
- Explore which type(s) of alternative workplace arrangements - home-based or Telecenter - will be feasible in your agency. Many employees will have existing home offices that may be utilized.
- Include research on government equipment (computers, furniture, etc.) which can be obtained through programs such as the Federal Utilization and Disposal Program. Information is available through the General Services Agency (Federal Supply Service) in your local area.
- If possible, visit area Telecenters.
- Evaluate and identify equipment needs and costs.



- Make an official announcement and commitment to the Telework Initiative.

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## *Telework*

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### Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

#### **Question - What approach should agencies take in determining which positions are appropriate for Telework?**

Answer - Agencies should take a proactive approach that seeks to extend Telework to the widest range of employees possible. Agencies should begin with a presumption that **all positions** are appropriate for Telework.

#### **Question - What approach should managers/supervisors take in determining whether a position is suitable for Telework?**

Answer - Managers/supervisors should take a positive analytical approach by focusing their attention on the nature of the work and job characteristics in determining whether a position is suitable for telework. In many cases, 100 percent of a position will not lend itself to telework. However, the focus on discrete job tasks works to identify those tasks that can be performed away from the main office.

#### **Question - Who is responsible for approving an employee's request to Telework?**

Answer - Each Federal agency sets up its own approval process, but generally the immediate supervisor must agree to a specific employee's request.

#### **Question - What role do unions play?**

Answer - Agencies are strongly encouraged to develop their Telework programs in partnership with their **unions and other stakeholders**. Telework affects conditions of employment and agencies must consult and negotiate with unions, as appropriate, regarding Telework programs.

#### **Question - Does an employee have a right to Telework? Could an employee be forced to work at home?**

Answer - No, to both questions. Subject to any applicable union agreement, management decides whether the employee can work off-site, depending on the nature of the position and the characteristics of the employee. Management has the right to end an employee's use of the Telework option if, for example, the employee's performance declines or if the arrangement no longer meets the organization's needs.

#### **Question - Can Telework help an employee with child or other dependent care needs?**

Answer - Telework can provide valuable assistance with dependent care. Time saved commuting to

work can be spent with family members. For example, a parent may need less after school care for a school age child, or an adult child may have time to take an aging parent to the doctor. However, employees should not be caring for children when they are working at home.

**Question - Won't the employee's work suffer without direct, onsite supervision?**

Answer - The opposite is more often the case, partly because the employee working at home has fewer interruptions and distractions and partly because the individual has a strong incentive to demonstrate the value of working at home.

**Question - How can the supervisor monitor work performance when the employee is not physically present?**

Answer - Managers can measure what the employee produces by examining the product or results of the employee's efforts. It is also helpful to use project schedules, key milestones, regular status reports, and team reviews. Supervisors may call employees who are working at home.

**Question - Can teleworkers follow an alternative work schedule?**

Answer - Yes. In fact, Telework work schedules should be sufficiently flexible to permit periodic work schedule adjustments. Initial Telework schedules may require trial and error adjustments to determine the optimal schedule to meet the needs of the employee and the organization.

**Question - What about the impact on the office when some employees are working at an alternative worksite?**

Answer - Certain guidelines must be established to minimize adverse impact on other staff members before employees begin to work at alternative worksites. The overall interests of the office must take precedence over working at alternative sites. A supervisor may require an employee to work at the main worksite on a day scheduled for an alternative worksite if the needs of the office so require. Telework should not put a burden on staff remaining in the office. An equitable distribution of work load should be maintained, and methods should be instituted to ensure that main office employees are not saddled with the Teleworker's responsibilities.

**Question - What equipment will the employee need at the home based worksite and who will provide it?**

Answer - The needed equipment and who will provide it will vary by situation. Generally speaking, organizations are not required to provide equipment at home based worksites. Each agency must establish its own policies on the provision and installation of equipment.

**Question - Do all teleworkers work with high-tech equipment?**

Answer - No. While technology can be very helpful to most teleworkers, a simple telephone may suffice for many.

**Question - Who is responsible for maintaining and servicing Government or privately owned equipment used at the alternative worksite?**

Answer - Generally, the Government will be responsible for the service and maintenance of

Government-owned equipment. teleworkers using their own equipment are responsible for its service and maintenance.

**Question - Who pays for any increase in home utility expenses incurred by employees as a result of Telework?**

Answer - Work-at-home arrangements may increase an employee's home utility costs. Balanced against these increases are potential savings to the employee resulting from reduced commuting, child care (during the period the employee would otherwise be commuting to and from work), meals, and clothing expenses. Potential cost and savings to the employee and the Government cannot be viewed in isolation from each other. An agency may not use appropriated funds to pay for items of personal expenses unless there is specific statutory authority.

**Question - Are business phone calls made from the home reimbursable?**

Answer - An employee may be reimbursed for business related long distance phone calls over the employee's personal phone. GSA regulations (41 CFR 101.7) provide for reimbursement on SF 1164 for telephone calls approved by the supervisor. Agencies may also provide employees with Government telephone credit cards.

**Question - Who is liable for work related injuries and/or damages at the alternative worksite?**

Answer - The Federal Government. Government employees suffering from work related injuries and/or damages at the alternative worksite are covered under the Military Personnel and Civilian Employees Claims Act, the Federal Tort Claims Act, or the Federal Employees Compensation Act (workers' compensation).

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